

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 01574 161407Z
ACTION SCS-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC, SOCI, PINS, LY
SUBJ: VIVEROS ARREST CASE - ALCOHOL AT THE OIL CAMPS

REF: TRIPOLI 1573

1. BACKGROUND: SINCE THE COUNTRYWIDE BAN ON ALCOHOL WAS IMPOSED SHORTLY AFTER THE 1969 REVOLUTION, THE QADHAFI REGIME HAS AS A RULE LOOKED THE OTHER WAY ON THE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL BY EXPATRIATES AT THE OIL CAMPS. OASIS, ESSO, MOBIL AND OXY ALL HAVE EXPATRIATE CLUBS AT THEIR DESERT FIELDS FOR THE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF "FLASH", A HIGHLY POTENT DISTILLED WHITE LIGHTENING. THESE CLUBS OPERATE ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE ALCOHOL WILL NOT BE SERVED TO ARABS, SOLD, OR TRANSPORTED FROM THE CAMPS.

2. THE VIVEROS CASE, MORE ACCURATELY THE DAHRA CLUB CASE, SINCE VIVEROS WAS ARRESTED SIMPLY BECAUSE HIS NAME APPEARED ON A BOX OF EQUIPMENT, IS THE FIRST TIME THAT LIBYAN AUTHORITIES HAVE SERIOUSLY INTERFERED WITH THE OPERATION OF THE CLUBS. THE DAHRA CLUB WAS BEEN CLOSED, THE STILL DISMANTLED, AND EXPATRIATES LEAVING DAHRA ON FIELD BREAK ARE BEING SEARCHED FOR ALCOHOL.

3. WE HAVE HEARD RUMORS THAT CLUBS AT OTHER CAMPS
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ARE BEING INVESTIGATED AS WELL, BUT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL IF THERE IS A CHANGE IN LIBYAN POLICY ON ALCOHOL IN THE CAMPS OR WHETHER ONE OVERZEALOUS PROVINCIAL PROSECUTOR HAS TAKEN ACTION ON HIS OWN.

4. IF THE CLUBS ARE CLOSED AND EXPATRIATES ARE NO LONGER ALLOWED TO HAVE ALCOHOL AT THE CAMPS, LIBYAN

OIL PRODUCTION COULD BE AFFECTED SINCE SOME OF THE
EXPATRIATES WOULD REFUSE TO WORK IN THE DESERT ANY
LONGER.
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